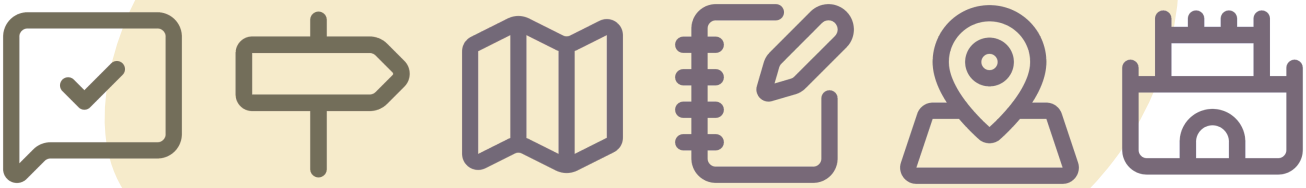
# SALT & LIGHT LIVING

## CONVERSATION STARTER

WEEKDAY LIVING

Weekday Living



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# BEST PRACTICES FOR CONVERSATION GROUPS

- Do your best to read a portion of the passage and guidebook each day.
- Try to meet together once a week for a conversation.
  - When and where will you meet?

- Take the time to pray for those in your Conversation Group. There is a page at the end of the guidebook to record prayer requests.
- Be thinking about who you know that might be interested in joining the conversation.
- Be thinking about how you can live as salt and light during the weekdays.
- No certificates or credits will be earned. Do your best. This is your life. We are trying to create an unstoppable pattern of a thriving weekday faith. Offer yourself lots of grace, stick with it, and trust God.



# WHAT MAKES CONVERSATION STARTERS UNIQUE?

## Objective

**The most important endeavor in all of life is to enjoy a vibrant spiritual life.** When our spiritual lives are heading in the right direction all of life goes better. While our challenges will not be erased, spiritual vitality provides needed direction and fulfillment.

## Approach

- **The content is Bible-based, yet scripture is not embedded in the curriculum.** We want to help you learn both from the Bible and about the Bible. Bibles can also include helpful items like maps, timelines, and other verses for reference. All of which can transform the Bible from an ancient book that is challenging to engage into a dynamic collection of stories you embrace.

- **The content intends to be accessible to all regardless of spiritual background with unlimited growth expansion as you mature.** Everyone starts in a different place yet we are all headed in the same direction. One story in the Bible can contain inspiration and direction that lasts a lifetime.

- **For centuries the Bible stories were passed from one generation to the next by having important conversations in the home and among peers.** There would be holidays and festivals established to retell important parts of faith history. It would take thousands of years until the printing press was invented and the Bible would become mass produced. The content you experience is intended for one on one or one with a few type conversations with those you know and trust.

- **Conversations Groups are intended to self-multiply as you are inspired in your faith desiring to share with those you know and trust.** The path toward God and with God is best experienced with those closest to us. Jesus found twelve friends then they shared their experience over many decades across the ancient world as their lives travelled to different places. Ultimately the story of Jesus has made it to us so we keep the tradition alive by sharing it with others.

- **Conversation Groups are intended to help you be fruitful by living as salt and light during the weekdays.** (We encourage you to rest over the weekend and serve your local church.) Being busy is different than being productive. Just as we long for inner peace and contentment, humans also long to live fulfilling lives. Every weekday we traffic with people and by people who need encouragement. Sometimes just a simple word is needed, other times an act of service is most appropriate. You might even feel compelled to serve alongside others through a local nonprofit cause. Giving is receiving. It is a powerful expression that not only helps others, but expands personal joy.

# OUTCOMES

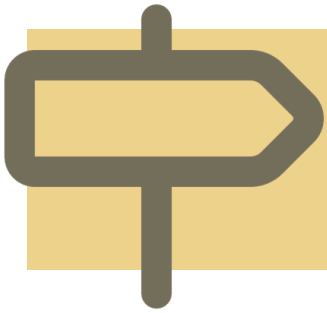
WE HOPE YOU LEARN FROM THE BIBLE.

WE HOPE YOU LEARN ABOUT THE BIBLE.

WE HOPE YOU FEEL CONFIDENT AND RESPONSIBLE TO CHASE A VIBRANT SPIRITUAL LIFE.

WE HOPE YOU FEEL INSPIRED TO LIVE DURING YOUR WEEKDAYS AS SALT AND LIGHT.

WE HOPE YOU FEEL INSPIRED TO INVITE OTHERS TO LEARN WITH YOU IN THE FUTURE.



# LETS GET STARTED
## SALT & LIGHT

Salt and light are metaphors Jesus leverages to inspire people of faith to become intentional difference makers for his kingdom in our everyday lives. He actually introduces these ideas in what is commonly called “The Sermon on the Mount;” I like to think of it as Jesus' “Sermon about the Kingdom.” It is the longest recorded teaching we have by Jesus in the Bible, so it is extremely significant.

Our conversation will begin in Matthew 5-7 as we frame principles with the unique perspective of being salt and light in the world. This passage of scripture will help us think about preparing ourselves to be positive contributors in the modern work of God’s kingdom movement on earth.

Next, we will explore two books written by Luke. One bears his name, Luke; the other is the book of Acts. Luke was not an apostle, but he was a committed traveling companion of the Apostle Paul. His books are considered a two-volume unit. Volume one is about the life of Jesus, while volume two details early believers spreading the good news of Jesus and forming his church across the ancient world. Luke is unique as a writer in several important ways: he is the only Gentile author in the New Testament, he was an educated medical physician, and he wrote the largest portion of the New Testament in terms of volume (the Apostle Paul wrote the most books).

Because Luke was a Gentile, he felt compelled to write stories that highlighted interactions not solely focused on Jewish religious traditions. Therefore, he has several interactions by regular people doing wonderfully good things that contributed to kingdom influence.

Finally, we will close by looking into a few stories about what happens when God’s people come together to do something extraordinary. All of us can do good on our own, and we should. However, it often takes a group, maybe a church or a nonprofit organization to create lasting good on a large scale in our communities. Then, when you add the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit's work, our good has the potential to become eternally and exponentially good for those we serve.

I think you are going to be very inspired by this conversation.

01

# LESSON 1

## BECOMING SALT & LIGHT
## MATTHEW 5

## OVERVIEW

I believe that we want to be good people who do good things in the world. I also believe that parents desire the same for their kids. This is why we train them to share their toys and be polite to grown-ups.

However, as we grow up, life often happens to us and we lose focus of such a simple calling. Maybe we experience a personal hurt or a disappointment that causes us to be more protective of ourselves. Maybe the demands and schedules we keep consume all our time, distracting us from many opportunities to do good in our world. One thing we know for sure, all of us have enough tendencies involving self-preservation to keep us occupied.

Now, how can we renew our commitment to being the kind of people our parents wanted us to be—people who regularly do good and make a difference in the lives of others? Let's make it more of a lifestyle than an exceptional day of volunteering or going on a mission trip with our church. We need to become kingdom people living Jesus' teachings of salt and light.

01

# LESSON 1
## BECOMING SALT & LIGHT
## MATTHEW 5

## OUTLINE

**Matthew 5:1-12**
Life was overwhelming for Jesus' primary audience, the Jewish people. They were living in the land the Old Testament refers to as the Promised Land—the land promised to Abraham, conquered by Joshua, and ruled by King David. Yet, in Jesus' day, this land belonged to the Roman Empire. Rome ruled not only the land itself but also the people living in it, including those known as God's people, the nation of Israel

Despite being a majority of the population the Israelites were the minority in terms of power. There is no better picture of this than the Roman Emperor declaring the death of all Jewish boys under the age of two around the time of Jesus' birth.

As Jesus launches into His sermon, he does not ignore their plight. They feel both oppressed and depressed. This is why he begins by addressing their feelings of poor in spirit, mourning, and hungering for a different way of life. However, the kingdom of God was at hand in Jesus' presence. His ways are higher. His plans are bigger. They need a reframing of their position as followers of King Jesus.

**Matthew 5:13-16**
Protection and mere survival were no longer the goals. They need to rise to new heights of purposeful kingdom people, living as salt and light. Though the calling is high, the metaphors of salt and light are rather common. These were everyday items that everyone understood. Both are small yet pack a powerful punch. Just a little salt will do. The whole salt shaker is not necessary. Just a little light works fine. No one needs to be blinded.

01

# LESSON 1
## BECOMING SALT & LIGHT
## MATTHEW 5

## OUTLINE

Matthew 5:17-20
Now that Jesus has them looking in a more positive direction, he needs to instruct them. He turns to something they are very familiar with: the Old Testament laws, including the Ten Commandments. But Jesus is going to show them what those laws really mean and call them to a new level of living—the way of Jesus.

Matthew 5:21-26
The minimal standard of salt and light is not to be defined as 'avoid murder,' but rather 'take note of your anger,' 'avoid judgment,' or 'watch your words.' These are all instructions about preparing ourselves on a daily basis to live with a new perspective of how we see those around us–especially those we perceive as threatening or harmful to our futures.

Matthew 5:27-32
Here, he reframes family and marriage. Our home base needs to be prioritized. The minimal standard isn't to avoid adultery and divorce, but rather to draw the line at lustfulness. Do not limit your perspective to an extremely dramatic choice of a few people. Instead, look for the more subtle, daily choices made in secret that misdirect or distract. What we think in our minds could be what makes our salt less salty and our light dimmer, especially among our family.

01

# LESSON 1
## BECOMING SALT & LIGHT
## MATTHEW 5

## OUTLINE

Matthew 5:33-37
Be a simple person of integrity. Say what you mean, mean what you say, and do what you say. Less opinions, more actions. Being trustworthy and dependable goes a long way in today's world.

Matthew 5:38-48
He concludes this section with possibly the most challenging portion of all by reframing how to look at those who are oppressing them. If we are going to follow Jesus' way we must be willing to go all the way. Earlier he spoke of the persecution that naturally comes from living for a kingdom that is not of this world. (See Matthew 5:11-12.) Jesus certainly modeled this lifestyle. Everyone deserves to be loved and served, even our enemies. While salt and light are easy to understand they can be very challenging to live. We need to get ready.

01

# LESSON 1
## BECOMING SALT & LIGHT
## MATTHEW 5



## OUTCOME

***Oftentimes, there are before, during, and after aspects of being salt and light. The journey begins with our preparation, which leads to the moment of action. Then, we continue to stay engaged, watching for and encouraging the good fruit that follows.***

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6. Sometimes we have to stop something old or start something new to take a step forward in our faith. As you strive to grow a salt and light lifestyle should you consider either stopping an old pattern or starting a new practice this week? If so, name it.

Let's think about people we might want to start a conversation with in the future because we think they would enjoy it and find it helpful.

Let's think about how we can live as salt and light in our everyday lives.

# CONVERSATION NOTES

02

# LESSON 2

## PRAY, FAST, GIVE
## MATTHEW 6

## OVERVIEW

This is one of my favorite Bible passages. To help you grasp its significance, there are two chapters in the Bible that link praying, fasting, and giving together. One of them is in the Old Testament and is included in your bonus reading. The second one is Matthew 6, directly from the mouth of Jesus. We can't miss the importance of these three habits in preparing us to be people of salt and light.

As you read, take note of a pattern. There will be something to do, something not to do, and a reward. Let's get to it straight away.

02

# LESSON 2
## PRAY, FAST, GIVE
## MATTHEW 6

## OUTLINE

**Matthew 6:1-4**
While our faith should produce actions that others notice, we should not be driven to produce actions desiring direct attention to ourselves. Jesus calls this type of life hypocritical. He sees it in the places of religion as well as on the streets.

We are not to make salt and light activities about us. That yields a limited reward that does not come from God. We are to give generously, enjoying an exponential reward both for us and the receiver of our generosity. Do, don't, and reward.

**Matthew 6:5-8**
Next up is prayer. At times we may pray publicly, but this is not an opportunity to impress others with our faith. Rather, prayer is primarily a private pursuit of a divine relationship. It is made for brutal honesty and personal faith. We can present our needs as well as those of others being as specific as possible because it's private.

Prayer is a great place to grow faith that leads to increased sensitivity and generosity. It is a wonderful step to serve others by praying for their needs.

Prayer can provide us with a discipline that creates margin. Thoughts, worries, and desires can crowd our minds. This life clutter often distracts and diminishes faith. Leaving our needs and the needs of others before the Father frees up our minds and hearts. When we get mental and emotional margin we find ourselves more available to serve those around us. Do, don't, and reward.

02

# LESSON 2

## PRAY, FAST, GIVE
## MATTHEW 6

## OUTLINE

**Matthew 6:9-15**

This is a very well-known passage of scripture. However, it was never intended to be quoted as a prayer removed from its context. We see that Jesus' teachings on salt and light occur in the midst of his teachings on prayer, fasting, and giving. How does this cause you to read it differently today?

How does each verse help you pray differently, while fasting and pursuing a more generous life? For example, verse 9 reminds us not to focus our prayers on ourselves, whether public or private. It can also give us a new perspective on a big life problem we or a friend might be facing. Start your prayers from the proper perspective of our Father in heaven to help avoid meaningless rants.

This prayer also addresses other life concerns that may get in the way of being salt and light. Worries about your future limits daily generosity. Holding hurt in your hearts makes you more protective and less giving.

As you read this example prayer, consider rewriting it in your own words. Integrate ideas about being salt and light along with generosity and fasting.

**Matthew 6:16-18**

Fasting is an important spiritual habit. It helps us disconnect from powerful influences and it refocuses our faith. Fasting should be done on a regular basis. We need to fast from influential items that are personally noticeable. When we fast from food we certainly feel it. I have fasted from things like coffee, social media, news, and digital devices as well.

The point is to remove something from your life for a season that is noticeable. It may even make you gloomy. However, you replace it with something that doesn't make you gloomy like God's presence in prayer and generosity toward others. Do, don't, and reward.

02

# LESSON 2
## PRAY, FAST, GIVE
## MATTHEW 6

## OUTLINE

**Matthew 6:19-21**
There is a lot wrapped in these few verses. Try to apply them distinctly to praying, fasting, and giving. They are exposing how our hearts need developing if we are going to consistently be salt and light.

When we embrace these three habits (pray, fast, and give) together, it helps reorient our hearts toward kingdom priorities. Do, don't, and reward.

**Matthew 6:22-23**
Jesus is using the metaphor of light again. Our eyes need light to function. Remind yourself of the common experience of trying to find something in the dark or navigating your car without good headlights in the middle of the night.

How we look at things affects what we think, feel, and do. Praying, fasting, and giving create more light, removing the trickery of darkness.

02

# LESSON 2

## PRAY, FAST, GIVE
## MATTHEW 6

## OUTLINE

**Matthew 6:24**
Money is powerful. It is a gift from God to care for us and provide enjoyment. It was never intended to steer our lives in the wrong direction or overwhelm us with anxiety. In case we have not been connecting the dots of praying, fasting, and giving to our financial resources Jesus hits it straight on for the sake of clarity.

Take a look back on what you have read so far and notice the connection to your resources. The learning points are obvious when it comes to generosity, but the theme is also interlaced throughout the example prayer Jesus provided.

**Matthew 6:25-34**
It is important to note that Jesus is not done with this topic of how our minds and hearts are influenced by darkness. He keeps addressing our resources, though now he gets very practical. The stuff we need day-to-day and in the future is cared for by our Father in heaven. Darkness surrounds us in life. Our needs and challenges are real. However, so is our faith. Being salt and light consistently takes constant reorientation.

Seek first his kingdom through praying, fasting, and giving then all these things will be added to you. Do, don't, and reward.

**Bonus Reading:**
**Isaiah 58**
So you know, Matthew 6 isn't the first time God's people outwardly did the acts of praying, fasting, and giving without the inner motivations being aligned. Hundreds of years in the past Isaiah addressed this issue. It is mind-blowing the integrity between these two passages. Isaiah is very specific on the do's, don't's, and rewards. He doesn't leave out the idea of salt and light. Have some fun as you compare these two unique passages.

02

# LESSON 2

## PRAY, FAST, GIVE
## MATTHEW 6

## OUTCOME

***Oftentimes, there are before, during, and after aspects of being salt and light. The journey begins with our preparation, which leads to the moment of action. Then, we continue to stay engaged, watching for and encouraging the good fruit that follows.***

1. What inspired, challenged, or confused you from the passage?

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6. Sometimes we have to stop something old or start something new to take a step forward in our faith. As you strive to grow a salt and light lifestyle should you consider either stopping an old pattern or starting a new practice this week? If so, name it.

Let's think about people we might want to start a conversation with in the future because we think they would enjoy it and find it helpful.

Let's think about how we can live as salt and light in our everyday lives.

# CONVERSATION NOTES

03

# LESSON 3

## YOUR DREAM LIFE
## MATTHEW 7

## OVERVIEW

This text will be our final passage focused upon preparing ourselves to live as salt and light. You will discover some familiar themes like hypocrisy in religion, the discipline of prayer, and the opportunity for generous living. Try to remember the context of Matthew 5-6, as this is a unified talk to one audience. Matthew 7 wraps up the talk.

Ultimately, our lives will reap fruit. This applies to all of us. Fruit is a result of the foundation we are building upon. That foundation is our choice. When Jesus is done with his "Sermon on the Mount," the crowds are astonished. It is like nothing they have ever heard from their religious leaders. Try to experience their same astonishment as if the lifestyle Jesus is encouraging presents itself as at least somewhat mildly different than what we might be exuding. Of course, it could be radically different from the religion we propose.

If you have ever dreamed of experiencing more mental and emotional freedom, of resting on a rock-solid foundation during a life storm, or of enjoying abundantly good fruit at every turn in your life, this chapter is for you.

03

# LESSON 3
## YOUR DREAM LIFE
## MATTHEW 7

## OUTLINE

**Matthew 7:1-6**
Having a judgmental outlook toward others is an easy way to play defense against what might be perceived as a threat. We can judge others in our minds to bring them down in our esteem or we might criticize them with our tongues to keep them at bay if we feel threatened. What most commonly causes your judgmental thoughts? How often do they lead to external action?

Every one of us is better off by focusing our attention toward the aspects of our lives that chip away at our dreams. Things like selfishness, pride, and fear can rob us of peace, contentment, fulfillment, purpose, and fruit. How much energy do we burn pursuing the right things as opposed to becoming entangled in wrong?

**Matthew 7:7-12**
It is time to play offense against life and what is happening around us. Pray, ask, seek, and knock. Replace judgement with something that is far more productive for everyone. If you want your dream life of a firm foundation with abundant fruit, praying is where we begin. Praying is more helpful than tearing others down; it is your path of receiving and giving. Jesus is reminding his listeners of the foundational importance of his previous discourse. Do, don't, and reward. Pray, fast, give.

03

# LESSON 3
## YOUR DREAM LIFE
## MATTHEW 7

## OUTLINE

**Matthew 7:13-23**
We can limit religion to not murdering or committing adultery, which Jesus previously discussed. It can even become a box we check in terms of what we do on Sunday morning with our time. It is the subtle stuff we accept as normal that can be harmful like anger and lust. These small choices we make every day actually produce lasting fruit that no one wants to reap. Our desire for good fruit comes by focusing our hearts and minds on the little things of obedience. The narrow way is the preferred way.

**Matthew 7:24-29**
So if we go back to where this talk began in Matthew 5, the listeners definitely felt like their lives were walking on quicksand. They probably even felt like it was the fault of the Roman Empire. Jesus is encouraging them. They were looking in the wrong direction and making the wrong conclusions, and those conclusions were costing them their futures.

The way of faith is fraught with enemies raging on the outside and inside of our lives. While we cannot control what is externally conflicting, we are 100% in charge of what is going on internally.

Jesus would set the example clear. He had enemies that wanted him exterminated from earth. Yet, he allowed his life to be filled with helping those around him. He would be interrupted, crowded, begged, pressured, maybe even nagged. Yet, he never stopped being salt and light.

03

# LESSON 3

## YOUR DREAM LIFE
## MATTHEW 7



## OUTCOME

***Oftentimes, there are before, during, and after aspects of being salt and light. The journey begins with our preparation, which leads to the moment of action. Then, we continue to stay engaged, watching for and encouraging the good fruit that follows.***

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# CONVERSATION NOTES

04

# LESSON 4

## THE BOY WITH THE FISHES AND LOAVES
## JOHN 6:1-35

## OVERVIEW

From this point forward, we are going to look at real life examples of people who had opportunities to live as salt and light during their regular weekday activities. These will be ordinary people having moments presented to them when a small act has the potential to become something big.

For example, the boy with the fish and loaves is the unexpected hero. What he has in his hands, partnered with Jesus' hands, creates an extraordinary experience. Then this miracle has a long tail. Jesus uses it to teach the disciples, it draws the crowds to keep following, and it becomes a memorable teaching about the bread of life.

It is a story about spontaneous generosity. It is a story about a little going a long way. It is a story about being ready and showing up. You never know what may happen next.

04

# LESSON 4

## THE BOY WITH THE FISHES AND LOAVES
## JOHN 6:1-35

## OUTLINE

**John 6:1-6**

The scene is set. Jesus has been ministering publicly for about one year. We know this because each year can be marked by the Passover as it is mentioned in this text. Another marker for the Passover is Jesus' final year and week of his life. So the disciples have been with him long enough that they are ready for a faith test and next-step growth opportunity.

Giving moments can be power-packed with purpose. It might be about the person needing to be served, however it might be about the person serving. These moments are not just about the physical need, but the internal and eternal needs as well. You just never know.

**John 6:7-9**

Philip and Peter do what all of us would do, simple math with the resources easily at hand. It is where we all start, but it is never where Jesus ends. The disciples conclude the task is impossible. Does this mean they have failed the test? Not really, they have just begun.

**John 6:10-15**

Jesus has them sit down. Then he prays. Next, he asks them to grab baskets and start distributing the abundance. Try to put yourself in the story. How many times did one disciple come back to Jesus for a refilling of his basket? What is going through his mind on every trip? Everyone eats, not just a ration, but until they are full. Finally, the disciples sweep the area so as not to be wasteful. Each disciple gets a nice little bonus at the end of the lesson. A basketful of leftovers helping them go full circle with this learning moment.

04

# LESSON 4

## THE BOY WITH THE FISHES AND LOAVES
## JOHN 6:1-35

## OUTLINE

**John 6:16-21**

Jesus allows the test to continue with a quick application. He puts the disciples in a boat on a lake with a storm. What would they do? Mark 6:51-52 tells this same story, and Jesus makes a connection between the miraculous feeding and the storm. His expectation is that the disciples have transferred the lesson of Jesus' miraculous care for the 5,000 into their present moment in the boat. They need the confidence of faith to overcome their present fear.

**John 6:22-25**

The next day, the crowds file into boats following after Jesus. What is about to happen? The lesson of the loaves becomes a spiritual revelation to anyone who will hear. We have travelled a long way from the boy with the fish and loaves helping solve the pain of hunger on a random day.

04

# LESSON 4

## THE BOY WITH THE FISHES AND LOAVES
## JOHN 6:1-35

## OUTLINE

**John 6:26-35**

Jesus' life was never intended to be a sideshow of tricks. Everything he did and taught has the intention of raising belief in people. The boy with the fish and loaves joined with Jesus on this day. It was a random day with a spontaneous moment that seemed like an impossible task. However, leaning into the opportunity with what he had and who Jesus was with, made all the difference. He could have stepped back because the problem seemed far too big without any hope of a positive lasting effect. This would have been a false assumption resulting in stolen fruit.

Sometimes we need to step in to see what is possible for everyone. The opportunity can feel beyond a solution. All the while, the result may actually be bigger than anyone can dream. A little salt, a little light can go miraculously further than any human expectation.

04

# LESSON 4

## THE BOY WITH THE FISHES AND LOAVES
## JOHN 6:1-35



## OUTCOME

***Oftentimes, there are before, during, and after aspects of being salt and light. The journey begins with our preparation, which leads to the moment of action. Then, we continue to stay engaged, watching for and encouraging the good fruit that follows.***

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# CONVERSATION NOTES

05

# LESSON 5

## THE WOMEN WHO SUPPORTED JESUS

## LUKE 8:1-18

## OVERVIEW

Most people never realize that once Jesus began his public ministry, his carpentry business took a decline. This meant as he travelled he was dependent upon supporters. Some opened their homes or provided meals while others were financial partners. We can assume the financial support Jesus needed was significant because there were 12 disciples on his ministry team and one of them served as a treasurer. (See John 13:29.)

Luke specifically mentions a group of financial partners who were faithfully behind the scenes investing in the kingdom. We know the names of three women. Additionally, Luke refers to many others who were a part of Jesus' support system.

Sometimes the opportunity to be salt and light is not out front; it is behind the scenes, cheering others forward. Whether we are out front or behind the scenes, we all play a significant role in planting seeds that have the potential to produce good fruit in the lives of others.

05

# LESSON 5

## THE WOMEN WHO SUPPORTED JESUS
## LUKE 8:1-18

## OUTLINE

**Luke 8:1-3**

It is Luke's style to draw attention to unlikely heroes. Here, he mentions a few women by name, providing a glimpse into their backgrounds. Mary Magdalene was previously demon-possessed and had personally experienced the freedom from evil that Jesus provided. Joanna came from wealth and privilege, as her husband served in the royal court of Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great. He was the ruling governor of Rome over Galilee.

Jesus is travelling, preaching, teaching, and advancing the kingdom of God. These behind-the-scenes women are highlighted as an important part of his ministry. God does not call all of us to be professional ministers on Sunday morning stages or highly-skilled directors of nonprofit causes. Kingdom causes need both: the forward-facing skilled individual and the behind-the-scenes financial supporter.

**Luke 8:4-8**

These supporters are right there with Jesus standing in the crowd as he teaches about the power of seeds. Seeds are another version of salt and light. Small things with big influence. While these women are not teaching the large crowd, they are very much a part of this seed-sowing ministry and will be rewarded for their faithfulness.

05

# LESSON 5

## THE WOMEN WHO SUPPORTED JESUS
## LUKE 8:1-18

## OUTLINE

**Luke 8:9-10**

So far, we have read that Jesus went about preaching, telling the good news, and speaking to large crowds. Now, he is going to settle into a training moment for leaders. In the very near future, these disciples will be sent with serious responsibilities. While these supporting ladies are not conducting the training or leadership multiplication plan, their financial partnership is making it possible. They are an important part of the work.

**Luke 8:11-15**

Salt-and-light people are also seed-sowing people. It is a big relief to know we are not responsible for the quality of the soil. The supporters and partners in Jesus' ministry aren't instructed to find the best soil and only sow seed in it. His instruction for us is to be salt, light, and seed casters wherever we go. The seed can only do its work when it hits the soil.

As seed sowers, we cannot solve the challenges and problems that people face. However, we can sow a seed by living Bible truth, letting it do its best work. We are not responsible for the soil; we are responsible for sowing the seed.

05

# LESSON 5
## THE WOMEN WHO SUPPORTED JESUS
## LUKE 8:1-18

## OUTLINE

**LLuke 8:16-18**

Jesus returns to the idea of light. Light is never meant to be hidden, nor is seed. Salt, light, and seeds are only good when they are put to use. Therefore, Jesus implores us to listen to what he is saying. Be generous with the good you have and more good will come to you; therefore, you can keep sowing seeds. It is the way a seed works. It naturally produces more seeds after it hits good soil. However, if we hide our salt, light, and seed we live diminished lives.

**Bonus Reading:**
**Luke 23:50-24:12**

The story of these women does not end in Luke 8. They are mentioned again at the end of Jesus' life. While the disciples are in hiding for fear, these women are publicly watching Jesus be removed from the cross and placed in the tomb. They are the first to arrive at Jesus' tomb on Easter morning, they encounter an angel, and share the good news of his resurrection. Their faithfulness as supporters over several years serves as an inspiration to all of us.

05

# LESSON 5

## THE WOMEN WHO SUPPORTED JESUS
## LUKE 8:1-18



## OUTCOME

***Oftentimes, there are before, during, and after aspects of being salt and light. The journey begins with our preparation, which leads to the moment of action. Then, we continue to stay engaged, watching for and encouraging the good fruit that follows.***

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Let's think about people we might want to start a conversation with in the future because we think they would enjoy it and find it helpful.

Let's think about how we can live as salt and light in our everyday lives.

# CONVERSATION NOTES

06

# LESSON 6

## THE 12 DISCIPLES & 72 OTHERS
## LUKE 9 & 10

## OVERVIEW

I have selected a few passages throughout Luke 9 and 10 to allow us to encounter Jesus releasing the 12 disciples to fulfill a specific mission. Then, 72 others are going to do the same.

Jesus shares his authority with regular people. We should ponder this principle for a little bit. You might even contrast it with the disciples' reaction when they see people they don't recognize leveraging this same authority for the mission.

There will be successes and failures. Honestly, if we can see it with a fresh set of eyes, there is a lot of shocking stuff throughout this passage. By the end of Luke 9 and 10, we are challenged to go all-in with Jesus' mission while embracing a life where faith and fear co-exist.

06

# LESSON 6

## THE 12 DISCIPLES & 72 OTHERS
## LUKE 9 & 10

## OUTLINE

**Luke 9:1-2**
What in the world is happening? The divine Son of God is sharing his supernatural authority with regular people who have only begun their path of understanding his ways. Do not quickly pass this moment of trust, risk, and kingdom purpose.

**Luke 9:3-6**
The next part of the salt and light strategy is to take nothing for the journey. This means being totally dependent upon the kindness of God through the generosity of others. Some people they encounter will be supportive; others will not. Sowing seeds and helping people was the unstoppable mission from place to place.

**Luke 9:37-43**
After their brief journey in groups of two the disciples return to Jesus. They had at least one public failure when they could not heal a boy of seizures. The good news is Jesus can. Our failures cannot stop the mission of God on earth.

06

# LESSON 6

## THE 12 DISCIPLES & 72 OTHERS
## LUKE 9 & 10

## OUTLINE

**Luke 9:46-48**
We will have moments of miraculous success as salt and light. Jesus works good fruit from the seed and we should not take the credit. The disciples probably let the success and growing crowds affect their perspectives.

Jesus drops a powerful teaching. Salt and light begins when a child demands you adjust your schedule and demeanor, making them the most important person in the moment. Surrendering your life agenda to Jesus is just like stopping yourself to meet the needs of a child.

**Luke 9:49-56**
At this point, the disciples feel like they are the authorities on how Jesus wants things done. Their ambitions are misguided. Jesus instructs them to keep being salt and light. The mission does not include policing others who are seeking to do the same even if you do not recognize them or disagree with their practices.

Try not to bypass the unnamed messengers serving Jesus in this passage. He has women who are supporting him, 12 disciples, unnamed messengers, and now we are going to meet the group of 72 others.

06

# LESSON 6

## THE 12 DISCIPLES & 72 OTHERS
## LUKE 9 & 10

## OUTLINE

**Luke 10:1-17**

More regular people get involved in the mission of salt and light. They are not the 12 appointed disciples that we know by name, yet they receive the same exact instructions. Jesus is revealing the need to multiply seed sowing by sending these followers into the kingdom mission. He even mentions we need to pray for more just like them. Let's join the ranks and multiply disciples by starting conversations like the one you are enjoying. Then, pray that fruit will come in the lives of those we know and love.

**Bonus Reading:**
**Matthew 25:14-30**

When I reflect upon the women supporters, the 12 disciples, and the 72 others it reminds me of a memorable teaching of Jesus known as "The Parable of the Talents." A talent is a measurement used when valuing precious metals so it became a symbol of wealth. A single talent could have been worth 15-20 years of pay for an average wage earner. This wealth immediately creates opportunity, responsibility, and risk. Knowing this helps us better see the behaviors of the three individuals in the parable.

We are called to be salt and light. We are given a wealth of resources to leverage. Can you think of all the resources you have at your disposal? Time, money, energy, experience, skills, training, even your physical presence to simply sit with someone who is lonely. Jesus shares his divine resources with us to empower our life mission. Also, he is gracious over the risk when we fail. We cannot stop his kingdom mission only being rewarded by it.

06

# LESSON 6

## THE 12 DISCIPLES & 72 OTHERS
## LUKE 9 & 10



## OUTCOME

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# CONVERSATION NOTES

07

# LESSON 7

## THE GOOD SAMARITAN
## LUKE 10:25-42

## OVERVIEW

While the good Samaritan is not a real person, the people to whom Jesus told this story were, and the lessons it teaches are many. The beginning of the story centers around an expert in the Jewish law: the Torah, which was the standard in the religious community. When responding to this legal expert, Jesus uses examples of highly esteemed Jewish religious leaders: the priest and Levite.

However, the plot twist will be the hero, a Samaritan man. The Jewish community did not accept the Samaritans. There was actual disdain because their heritage originates from the intermarrying of Jewish and Assyrian people. So, the rival becomes the hero in Jesus' example to the legal authority.

The level of compassion and care is complete. Jesus' message is clear. The expert in the law is put on the spot. How does he respond?

Luke concludes with another story, only this time all the people are real. Jesus will be in the home of sisters, Mary and Martha. Both will be seeking to serve Jesus. While he is not injured like the man in the good Samaritan parable, there is an opportunity to show hospitality. Mary and Martha take different paths. Let’s take a look and learn.

07

# LESSON 7

## THE GOOD SAMARITAN
## LUKE 10:25-42

## OUTLINE

**Luke 10:25-29**

This is no innocent question. It is more a test or even a trap. Some of the Jewish religious leaders are seeking to learn, but most are trying to find Jesus guilty of some version of treason worthy of arrest. Jesus flips the question back to the man. The gentleman replies acceptably by referring to the two greatest commandments. Jesus affirms his response. However, the man is not satisfied. He continues on with the test only now it is motivated by self-justification.

**Luke 10:30-32**

Jesus tells a parable providing an example. In the end he will flip the question back toward this legal expert exposing his real faith position. There is a man in obvious need lying in a ditch. There are two men who are more than qualified to assist. The expert in the Torah would have a great affinity for the priest and Levite. They should be the heroes. Unfortunately, the laws of Judaism were many, and if wrongly applied, a religious leader could have avoided helpfulness. In this particular situation, taking action would have potentially rendered him unclean, making him unable to fulfill his Temple duties. So, avoidance is the choice.

07

# LESSON 7

## THE GOOD SAMARITAN
## LUKE 10:25-42

## OUTLINE

**Luke 10:33-35**

The care provided by the Samaritan was compassionate and comprehensive. There was an immediate compelling reason to help as opposed to a religious reason to avoid. Jesus is over the top when telling this story. Not only is the hero shocking, but the exhaustive nature of the help provided is undeniable. It involves the heart when he feels compassion. Then, it moves to strength when he provides medicine, lifting him upon his donkey, and transporting him to the inn. Finally, it concludes with his mind as many decisions related to his care needed to be made. This love in action was with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength.

**Luke 10:36-37**

Jesus flips the question back to the legal expert. Is life about who is worthy of being my neighbor or are we behaving neighborly to all? Was he really living to the standard of which he previously affirmed?

While he replies with the correct answer, his disdain is made obvious by the fact that he cannot even use the word "Samaritan" in his reply.

07

# LESSON 7
## THE GOOD SAMARITAN
## LUKE 10:25-42

## OUTLINE

**Luke 10:38-42**
Next, Jesus travels to a good friend's home where he often stayed. They weren't neighbors per se. They were more than neighbors; they were good friends. How does servanthood look in this setting? Martha is diligently laboring in the kitchen, probably feeling a mixture of pressure, frustration, and the fear of missing out. These emotions get the best of her as she impatiently toots her own whistle, insinuates Jesus doesn't care, and that Mary is lazy.

In some regards both the legal expert and Martha have some learning to do. Perfection according to the law and doing enough acts of service are not necessary to earn eternal life. Mary is the example of where it begins. Learn from Jesus, he interprets the law favorably both towards faith and servanthood.

Now we know the full answer to the original question of 'what must I do to inherit eternal life.'

**Bonus Reading:**
**Matthew 25:31-40**
On another day, Jesus tells a parable about who will inherit the Kingdom of God–those who gain eternal life. The punchline to this parable is a familiar passage. Here, Jesus reveals that when we do things like feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, give the thirsty a drink, and care for the sick, we are doing it unto Jesus. What a privileged opportunity we have to serve the Savior of the world when we live as salt and light.

07

# LESSON 7

## THE GOOD SAMARITAN
## LUKE 10:25-42



## OUTCOME

***Oftentimes, there are before, during, and after aspects of being salt and light. The journey begins with our preparation, which leads to the moment of action. Then, we continue to stay engaged, watching for and encouraging the good fruit that follows.***

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# CONVERSATION NOTES

08

# LESSON 8

## THE GENEROUS FATHER
## LUKE 14-15

## OVERVIEW

Luke 15 contains one of the more memorable teachings of the Bible with the parable of the prodigal son. However, I hope to bring new light to this story by setting it firmly in its context. Luke 14 describes the details of two large celebration parties where many guest invitations are sent. As the RSVP list is being gathered, those you think would be eager to attend are not, while those you thought would never be invited are showing up strong.

Everyone is included in this lesson: the crowds, the sinners, and the religious leaders. Excuses are everywhere, as are opportunities.

Jesus teaches that being salt and light has a lot in common with both throwing a party and being the guest at a party. Luke 14 sets up Luke 15. Then, right in the middle of the two chapters is the resounding principle on how salt can lose its saltiness.

08

# LESSON 8

## THE GENEROUS FATHER
## LUKE 14-15

## OUTLINE

**Luke 14:1-6**

Jesus decides to have dinner with the very people who are seeking to trap him into violating a religious law. In the future, these men will initiate his arrest, trial, and death. However, Jesus is being salt and light in what could be perceived as the enemy's camp. On the other hand, these religious leaders are silenced by Jesus' inquisition related to acts of service.

**Luke 14:7-14**

Learning to practice servanthood on a regular basis helps create an unstoppable habit. Embrace humility when you are a guest by serving those around you. Then, when you are the host, embrace humility as you prepare your guest list. Make a choice to practice humility by faithfully inviting people to lunch, coffee, or into your home. This is a great way to engrain salt and light as a giving lifestyle.

**Luke 14:15-24**

The greatest act of salt and light is inviting others to join us in living for the King and purposes of his kingdom. Think about the effort being extended by the man hosting the banquet, as well as the servant gathering the guests. Take note of the repetition in teaching contained in verses 13 and 21.

08

# LESSON 8

## THE GENEROUS FATHER
## LUKE 14-15

## OUTLINE

**Luke 14:25-34**

Jesus addresses the large crowds following him. They have been enjoying both his miracles and teachings, which put them on the receiving end of good gifts. Now is the time for clarity. Following Jesus is about giving as well, not just receiving. If we believe for ourselves, but not enough to live generously toward others, we have failed to understand an important purpose of faith. Our salt has lost its saltiness.

**Luke 15:1-2**

This is an ironic scene. Jesus is living the good teachings of Luke 14 in front of everyone. The religious leaders are digging in, not budging. They are far from following Jesus' insights and life example.

**Luke 15:3-7**

The parable of the lost sheep is about an all-out pursuit for something of great value that has been lost. Then comes relief when that which was lost is found. All of us know this experience well and cannot deny the reality of Jesus' teaching.

08

# LESSON 8
## THE GENEROUS FATHER
## LUKE 14-15

## OUTLINE

**Luke 15:8-10**
The previous example would have been easy to apply to a working man in the crowd. Now for an example that would identify with the ladies. The teaching is the same. Lost things matter and joy is the result of finding.

**Luke 15:11-31**
This example drives the point home to the religious leaders. The younger son is seen as representative of the crowd of tax collectors and sinners. While the older son identifies best with the Pharisees and scribes. The father is reflecting the actions of a gracious God living generously towards all, regardless of the path they take toward home. The party is so extravagant that it shocks both the younger and older sons. Salt and light is about inviting all, then shocking them with the scale of the party.

08

# LESSON 8

## THE GENEROUS FATHER
## LUKE 14-15



## OUTCOME

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# CONVERSATION NOTES

09

# LESSON 9

## THE RICH RULER, ZACCHAEUS, & THE WIDOW
## LUKE 18-21

## OVERVIEW

It is time to get ready to learn about extremes. When it comes to being salt and light, we need to be ready to go all-in immediately. Sometimes a compliment or listening ear is meaningful. However, other moments will require an over-the-top investment.

Jesus asks for extreme generosity. One man experiences extreme sadness. There's the offer of extreme rewards, both on earth and heaven. There is no time given to ponder or consider. The call of being salt and light requires an all-out leap of faith right in the moment, trusting the future will work out for the best for everyone involved.

09

# LESSON 9

## THE RICH RULER, ZACCHAEUS, & THE WIDOW
## LUKE 18-21

## OUTLINE

**Luke 18:18-23**
The rich ruler addresses Jesus with a very complimentary title, acknowledging him as being set apart as a religious teacher. Now, will the man receive Jesus' wisdom as one with authority over his generosity?

The initial test is passed with flying colors as the rich ruler has not broken some key commandments. Now for the extreme request: 'sell everything and give it to the poor.' This will exchange your pursuit from earthly rewards to heavenly gain.

It is important to note this was not a normal test Jesus gave everyone. He was most likely seeking to expose something within the rich ruler that needed revealing. The result is neither salt nor light, but extreme sadness because he was very rich.

**Luke 18:24-30**
Jesus sees his sadness, then keeps the conversation going. Ultimately, the message is not about his money, but his heart. He should not rest in proper religious behaviors or the false security of his riches. Jesus' kingdom is worth a full pursuit with a completely different kind of reward. Earthly standards cannot fathom it and heaven alone will measure it. Extreme rewards for now and in the future.

09

# LESSON 9

## THE RICH RULER, ZACCHAEUS, & THE WIDOW
## LUKE 18-21

## OUTLINE

**Luke 19:1-7**
Next, we have an example of a rich man who is seeking to discover and follow Jesus. His name is Zacchaeus, and yes he was a wee little man. His disposition is quite different from the rich ruler. Zacchaeus was seeking Jesus. He was not seeking to impress Jesus, test him, or justify himself in Jesus' presence. Zacchaeus joyfully welcomed Jesus into his life and home. Then, he welcomed him into his finances.

**Luke 19:8-10**
Zacchaeus immediately responds demonstrating his new found faith. There is no mention of murder, adultery, or any other commandment. Jesus does not even request a penny be given to the poor. Zacchaeus spontaneously offers to give half his resources away, and that–additionally–he would repay those he was swindled with four times what he took.

This is a good time to reflect on praying, fasting, and giving. Zacchaeus received an impression and then he obeyed. It was a voice inside him saying this is the right thing to do for others and he did it. Zacchaeus' generosity was both extreme and quick. Then, Jesus does not stop him. What an inspiration!

09

# LESSON 9

## THE RICH RULER, ZACCHAEUS, & THE WIDOW
## LUKE 18-21

## OUTLINE

**Luke 19:11-27**

Jesus tells a parable to help his followers understand the calling that is ahead. The Kingdom of God will not come to fruition quickly. This parable teaches that we are to invest our lives faithfully, receive the promised fruit, and keep investing until Jesus returns. Be salt and light every day in both little and big ways. Gaining interest in a savings account is a simple no-risk decision with little effort expended that would have been rewarded.

**Luke 21:1-4**

Our lesson began with a rich ruler who gave nothing and experienced extreme sadness. Then, a rich man (Zacchaeus) gave half his resources plus repayments, then enjoyed the affirmation of Jesus. Finally, the real hero is the poor widow who gave all she had, which is extreme generosity.

09

# LESSON 9

## THE RICH RULER, ZACCHAEUS, & THE WIDOW
## LUKE 18-21



## OUTCOME

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# CONVERSATION NOTES

10

# LESSON 10

## PETER, BARNABAS, AND CORNELIUS
## ACTS 2-10

## OVERVIEW

It is time to dive into Luke's second volume of work called Acts. What makes this book so special is how the first group of believers behaved after the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ.

To set the stage, we begin by reading a portion of Acts, which occurs 50 days after the death of Jesus Christ in the same city among the same people. All the players are there–from the disciples who were in hiding, to the religious leaders that had Jesus arrested. The risk of being a believer publicly in Jerusalem cannot be overstated. What would they do with their faith and how would their community react?

Peter takes on leadership as he boldly proclaims the story of Jesus. Thousands believe and the church is born. Peter did not look back as his life was invested in sharing salt and light in unstoppable ways despite opposition.

Next, we look at Acts 4 when this first generation of believers continues to gather as a local church. These are real people living as salt and light in the middle of a city that has physical needs waiting to be met.

Finally, the story reaches past Jerusalem and the Jewish community when a Roman soldier who is known for his generosity receives a visit. God uses this man and his family to move the message of Jesus from one culture to another.

These final three conversation topics will prove to be very inspiring as regular people of faith live as salt and light together. They have no idea how their faithfulness will reap fruit in our lives thousands of years later.

10

# LESSON 10

## PETER, BARNABAS, AND CORNELIUS
## ACTS 2-10

## OUTLINE

**Acts 2:42-47**

It is weird to think about it, but Jesus never went to church. That's because it did not exist until Acts 2:42 and Jesus was already in heaven. What inspires me most about this passage is Luke describing how the first generation of believers authentically lived their faith. There was no playbook of ministries or services. They believed, they learned, they prayed, they gathered, they ate, and they gave.

There is a mention of signs and wonders that accompanied their activities. Now that Jesus is gone, the early believers and church need to be seen as carrying the authority of the kingdom forward. We will read an example of these signs soon in Acts 5.

Take note of how their faith immediately called them to release ownership of their assets and meet the needs of those around them. It was the normal behavior of faith by regular people that sowed seeds which produced fruit in their city. Today, what if believers strived to become the most generous people in every city?

**Acts 4:32-37**

Acts 2 was not a fluke. It was the start of something. Acts 4 reflects how generosity became rooted in the local church. Take note of how the apostles shared the message while the believers continued to release their resources. I love the creativity that reached beyond the limits of the currency in their hands as they liquidated funds by selling property. They were eradicating needs, which is a powerful fruit.

Do not miss the accountability of a distribution plan led by the apostles. Later, a new name was dropped: Barnabas. He was not one of the original apostles, showing faith is spreading beyond the inner circle.

Today, what if local churches strived to become the most generous organizations in every city?

10

# LESSON 10

## PETER, BARNABAS, AND CORNELIUS
## ACTS 2-10

## OUTLINE

**Acts 5:1-11**
Two more early believers are named: Ananias and Sapphira. Unfortunately, it will be a sad commentary on being disobedient as salt and light. They promote themselves as giving as generously as Barnabas, but it was deceit. The book of Acts shows many signs, wonders, and miracles that changed lives for the good; this one does not.

What stops me in my tracks are the spiritual entities involved in the act of generosity. Satan made an appearance in order to stop salt and light from moving forward at full force. Also, the work of the Holy Spirit is tested by these believers.

**Acts 10:1-8**
Faith has made its way to a Roman military leader and he is leading his family well. Together they were known for their devotion, prayers, and generous lifestyle. It is important to realize that this man had a reputation for serving beyond cultural distinctions. He was a Roman with the authority of the ruling power, living generously towards the common population of Jewish people residing in the city.

Cornelius' faithfulness puts him in a place to receive an extremely important message that church leaders need to hear. Simon Peter is summoned, and God will reveal to him that it is time for the gospel to move beyond the Jewish people residing in Jerusalem. The world was waiting and its entire population was in need of faith.

10

# LESSON 10

## PETER, BARNABAS, AND CORNELIUS
## ACTS 2-10

## OUTLINE

**Bonus Reading:**
**Acts 10:9-48**

There was a significant barrier between the Jews and everyone else. They were considered the people of God enjoying a special relationship of faith. This often caused them to live isolated from meaningful interactions with those of other cultures. Simon Peter needed some convincing that salt and light must cross lines of difference. Despite being an apostle, (and the most visible church leader), he needed a revelation to move forward. God supplies all the learning that ultimately carries the message around the ancient world right into our present reality.

10

# LESSON 10

## PETER, BARNABAS, AND CORNELIUS
## ACTS 2-10



## OUTCOME

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Let's think about people we might want to start a conversation with in the future because we think they would enjoy it and find it helpful.

Let's think about how we can live as salt and light in our everyday lives.

# CONVERSATION NOTES

11

# LESSON 11

## THE EXCELLENT GIVER
## 2 CORINTHIANS 8

## OVERVIEW

The final two conversations will come from the writings of the Apostle Paul. The work of God in Acts 10 with Cornelius and Peter has taken root. Salt and light have been shared beyond the city of Jerusalem and the Jewish culture. Gentiles are coming to faith as missionary efforts thrived across the ancient world. Small teams of people were sent out from the local church to share salt and light as far as Rome itself.

Our story begins in Acts 11:27-30 when a prophet predicts a future famine that would affect the Roman world being populated by the Jewish people. As a part of the plan to serve those in need, missionaries like Paul and Barnabas travelled the ancient world collecting an offering to be delivered to those suffering the effects of the famine.

2 Corinthians 8-9 details how first- and second-generation believers serve the hurting. This story is some 20 years after the death of Christ and 800 miles away from Jerusalem. Amazingly, generosity is powered by Gentiles toward the Jews living back in the region surrounding Jerusalem. It is a full-circle salt and light moment.

# 11

# LESSON 11
## THE EXCELLENT GIVER
## 2 CORINTHIANS 8

## OUTLINE

**2 Corinthians 8:1-6**
Generosity has no limits with these early believers. Despite their personal trials and poverty, their generosity could not be restrained. It was abundant, overflowing, wealthy, and beyond human comprehension. During a moment when their personal lives could have warranted being the recipient of the generosity of others, they begged for the privilege of being salt and light. These believers surrendered fully to God first as they extended the grace they had previously received, then shared it faithfully.

**2 Corinthians 8:7-15**
A thriving spiritual life is dynamic. Sometimes we take steps forward, while at other moments, we can feel static or even like we are going backwards. Paul encourages these believers to keep moving toward the standard of excellence in generosity.

There are a few items that are clear from this passage of scripture. The need had been well-discussed in advance. Those living in Corinth were to prepare with the arrival of Titus prior to Paul and his travelling mates. There are some subtle allusions to the current poverty of the Gentiles and the cultural conflict with the Jews. Paul is also seeking to make sure they are not all talk, but are ready to back up their words with action.

The example of Jesus' generosity should be our standard. The Corinthians had received the message of salvation through a Jewish witness like Paul; now, it was time for their faith to produce fruit back across cultural divides.

11

# LESSON 11

## THE EXCELLENT GIVER
## 2 CORINTHIANS 8

## OUTLINE

**2 Corinthians 8:16-24**

One final hurdle to cross is trust. The size of the offering grew to be very large as the missionary team travelled the ancient world collecting donations. This created an issue of security and stewardship. How could the givers know for sure the gift would be handled responsibly?

Generosity takes many partners. There is the donor who gives, the organization that distributes, and those in need receive. Each person must do their part trusting the other with the process. However, if the donor never gives, the process of meeting needs does not have a chance.

Paul appeals, making sure they are not all talk and no action. The Corinthian believers had plenty of reasons not to give. However, salt was about to come pouring out of the salt shaker.

11

# LESSON 11

## THE EXCELLENT GIVER
## 2 CORINTHIANS 8



## OUTCOME

***Oftentimes, there are before, during, and after aspects of being salt and light. The journey begins with our preparation, which leads to the moment of action. Then, we continue to stay engaged, watching for and encouraging the good fruit that follows.***

1. What inspired, challenged, or confused you from the passage?

2. What does this passage of scripture reflect about being prepared to live as salt and light?

3. What does this passage of scripture reflect about the moment of action involved in being salt and light?

4. What does this passage of scripture reflect about staying engaged seeing good fruit come from our obedience?

5. Does this passage of scripture remind you of another story or passage of scripture in the Bible?

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# CONVERSATION NOTES

12

# LESSON 12

## THE CHEERFUL GIVER
## 2 CORINTHIANS 9

## OVERVIEW

As we conclude this conversation guide, we see that the ending is quite beautiful. Living generously is not a “have to,” but a “get to.” All of us know this intrinsically, as we personally experience gift-giving. A lot of joy comes when we give a gift to another person on their birthday or during the holidays. Also, we have experienced how awkward it can feel at times to receive a gift. As Jesus once said, it is better to give than to receive. (See Acts 20:35.)

This chapter contains the Corinthians’ final work of preparation when striving to become excellent at giving. It also contains a long list of rewards that detail the fruit that continues to spring as salt, light, and seeds are shared.

# 12

# LESSON 12

## THE CHEERFUL GIVER
## 2 CORINTHIANS 9

## OUTLINE

**2 Corinthians 9:1-5**

The news of the famine travelled across the ancient world for some time–at least long enough for the Corinthian believers to get word to Paul that they wanted to participate in the offering. This testimony must have been tremendously inspiring as Paul shared it with others along his travels. Soon after, he and his companions passed through Corinth to pick up the gift. It had probably been a long time since they last communicated, so Paul wants to inform them that now is the time to get the offering ready. He is on his way.

**2 Corinthians 9:6-9**

Their generosity will not only be seen by Paul and countless others, but by God. Our God is generous and he constantly gives to us. He encourages us to live generous lives, following his example. Giving and serving are the paths that advance the Kingdom of God. Then, just like we have been learning, the blessings and provisions of God are multiplied back to the giver. Our needs will be met and our storehouses prepared for the next opportunity to be salt and light.

12

# LESSON 12

## THE CHEERFUL GIVER
## 2 CORINTHIANS 9

## OUTLINE

**2 Corinthians 9:10-15**

Paul concludes this section of scripture regarding their offering with a detailed list of the ripple effects it will produce.

- God provides so we can give and give again. (verse 10)
- We will reap a harvest of righteousness. (verse 10)
- We will be enriched in every way. (verse 11)
- Others will express thanksgiving to God. (verse 11-12)
- Generosity meets the needs of others. (verse 12)
- Generosity reveals and teaches the gospel. (verse 13)
- Generosity will help others glorify God. (verse 13)
- Generosity enriches relationships. (verse 14)
- Prayers will be prayed for those who are generous. (verse 14)
- The power of generosity is indescribable. (verse 15)

There is no better time than today to stop doing whatever holds us back and start doing whatever sets us free, so that we can enjoy overflowing lives of cheerful salt and light living. Let's possess a walk that exceeds our talk.

12

# LESSON 12

## THE CHEERFUL GIVER
## 2 CORINTHIANS 9

## OUTLINE

**Bonus Reading:**
**Matthew 26:6-13**
It seems fitting to conclude with a final salt and light hero. She serves as the one example who received an unbelievable compliment from none other than Jesus Himself.

The woman in our story embodies much of what we have seen in others. There is the extravagance of Zacchaeus and the widow, along with the creativity of Barnabas. She comes with what she has in her hands–like the boy with the fish and loaves–while overcoming the obstacles of criticism from those surrounding her.

Her generosity in the moment could have been missed. If she doesn't act, our story never occurs. She does not get a do-over. Instead Jesus says that she alone will be remembered forever as the ultimate giver of salt and light.

# 12

# LESSON 12

## THE CHEERFUL GIVER
## 2 CORINTHIANS 9



## OUTCOME

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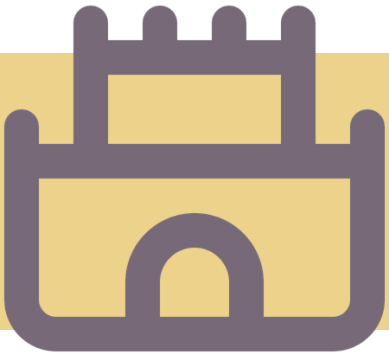
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# CONVERSATION NOTES



# REFLECTIONS AND NEXT STEPS AS YOU CONCLUDE THIS STUDY

What is your one big takeaway from this lesson series?

Do you think you are ready to start a conversation with someone you know and trust that would be interested in this lesson?

Do you want to walk through another guidebook?

Do you think you are ready to explore living as salt and light in a way that is in your wheelhouse of passion, experiences, and strengths?

# PRAYER REQUESTS

# CONVERSATION NOTES



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## START A CONVERSATION TODAY

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